

What should my cholesterol and triglycerides be?

Your **cholesterol** and **triglyceride** numbers should meet the targets in this chart unless your doctor helps you set different targets.

Target Blood Cholesterol Numbers for People with Diabetes	
Total cholesterol	below 200
LDL, or bad, cholesterol	below 100 or below 70 if you have cardiovascular disease or other health problems
HDL, or good, cholesterol	above 40 in men and above 50 in women
Triglycerides	below 150

Cholesterol is a type of fat found in your body's cells, in blood, and in many foods. High cholesterol can lead to heart and blood vessel disease, also called **cardiovascular** disease. Cardiovascular disease is the biggest health problem for people with diabetes.

LDL cholesterol. LDL cholesterol is known as the bad cholesterol because it builds up in the artery walls that supply blood to your heart. Extra cholesterol in your blood can build up in artery walls if

- you often eat foods that are high in LDL cholesterol
- high cholesterol runs in your family

HDL cholesterol. HDL cholesterol, or good cholesterol, carries cholesterol from other parts of your body back to your liver, which removes the cholesterol from your body.

Triglycerides. Triglycerides are another form of fat found in your blood and in food. Although triglycerides do not build up in artery walls, they can be a sign that your risk for cardiovascular disease is high.

Total cholesterol. Your total cholesterol number reflects all the cholesterol in the blood, but is mostly due to the amount of your LDL cholesterol.

Meeting your target numbers for cholesterol levels will help prevent heart disease, stroke, and damage to your blood vessels. Keeping cholesterol levels under control can also help with blood flow. Healthy meal planning, medicines, and physical activity can help you reach your target blood cholesterol numbers.

Have your cholesterol checked at least once a year. Your doctor will send you to a lab to have a small sample of your blood drawn for the cholesterol test. Ask your doctor whether you need medicine called a statin to control your cholesterol.

